

# Becoming a Fair-Minded Thinker

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# What is Critical Thinking

- CT involves basic intellectual skills, but these skills can be used to serve two incompatible ends: self-centeredness or fair-mindedness.
- We can develop in such a way that we learn to see mistakes in our own thinking, as well as the thinking of others.
- When conservatives see mistakes in the argument of liberals, we call them *weak-sense critical thinker*.
- To think critically in the strong sense requires that we develop fair-mindedness at the same time that we learn basic critical thinking skills.

# Component traits of the strong-sense critical thinker.



# What does fair-mindedness required?

- To be fair-minded is to strive to treat every viewpoint relevant to the situation in an unbiased, unprejudiced way.
- Fair-mindedness is especially important when the situation calls on us to consider the point of view of those whose welfare is in conflict with our short-term vested interest.
- The opposite of fair-mindedness is intellectual self-centeredness.
- The following traits are essential to be fair-minded and develop the critical thinking of you.

# Intellectual Humility: having knowledge of ignoring

- It can be defined as having a consciousness of the limits of one's knowledge.
- The opposite of intellectual humility is intellectual arrogance.
- Intellectual arrogant people often fall prey to their own bias and prejudice.
- They frequently claim to know more than they actually know.
- Example of intellectual arrogance: the police man assumes a man is guilty of a crime because of his appearance, because he's black or wears an earring.

# Intellectual Humility: having knowledge of ignoring

- Judging too quickly and be overly confident in our judgment is one of Intellectual arrogant blemish.
- intellectual humility can enable us to recognize the prejudices, false beliefs, and habits of mind that lead to flawed learning.

# Intellectual courage: being willing to challenge beliefs

- Intellectual courage can be defined as having a consciousness of the need to face and fairly address ideas, beliefs, or viewpoints toward which one has strong negative emotions and to which one has not given a serious hearing.
- The opposite of Intellectual courage is Intellectual cowardice.
- It's the fear of ideas that don't conform to one's own.
- We can simplify this trait as “not matter what side we are on, we often say of ourselves”

# Intellectual courage: being willing to challenge beliefs

- One of important reason to acquire intellectual courage is to overcome the fear of rejection by others because they hold certain beliefs and are likely to reject us if we challenge those beliefs



# Intellectual empathy: Entertaining opposing views

- Intellectual empathy is an awareness of the need to imaginatively put oneself in the place of others.
- It is to be able to accurately reconstruct the viewpoints and reasoning of others.
- The opposite of intellectual empathy is intellectual self-centeredness.
- When we think from a self-centered perspective, we are unable to understand others' thoughts, feeling, and emotions.

# Intellectual Integrity: Holding Ourselves to the Same Standards to Which We Hold Others

- Intellectual integrity is defined as recognition of the need to be true to one's own thinking and to hold oneself to the same standards one expects others to meet.
- It means to hold oneself to the same rigorous standards of evidence and proof to which one holds one's antagonists—to practice what one advocates for others.
- The opposite of intellectual integrity is intellectual hypocrisy, a state of mind unconcerned with genuine integrity.

# Intellectual Integrity: Holding Ourselves to the Same Standards to Which We Hold Others

- Testing intellectual integrity :Think of a situation where your behavior contradicts what you say you believe. This might be in your relationship with an employee, or a spouse

# Intellectual Perseverance: Working Through Complexity and Frustration

- Intellectual perseverance can be defined as the disposition to work one's way through intellectual complexities despite the frustration inherent in the task.
- One has intellectual perseverance when one does not give up in the face of intellectual complexity or frustration.
- The intellectually perseverant person displays firm adherence to rational principles despite the irrational opposition of others, and has a realistic sense of the need to struggle with confusion and unsettled questions over an extended time to achieve understanding or insight.

# Intellectual Perseverance: Working Through Complexity and Frustration

- The opposite of intellectual perseverance is intellectual laziness, demonstrated in the tendency to give up quickly when faced with an intellectually challenging task.

# Confidence in Reason: Recognizing that Good Reasoning Has Proven Its Worth

- *Confidence in reason is based on the belief that one's own higher interests and those of humankind will be best served by giving the freest play to reason.*
- *Reason encourages people to come to their own conclusions by developing their own rational faculties.*
- *In short, to have confidence in reason is to use good reasoning as the fundamental criterion by which to judge whether to accept or reject any belief or position.*

# Confidence in Reason: Recognizing that Good Reasoning Has Proven Its Worth

- The opposite of confidence in reason is *intellectual distrust of reason*,
- egocentric thinkers often express little confidence in reason; They do not understand what it means to have faith in reason.

# Intellectual Autonomy: Being an Independent Thinker

- Intellectual autonomy may be defined as internal motivation based on the ideal of thinking for oneself; having rational self-authorship of one's beliefs, values, and way of thinking; not being dependent on others for the direction and control of one's thinking.
- Autonomous persons are persons in charge of their lives. They are not irrationally dependent on others and not controlled by infantile emotions.
- They have self-control. They are competent. They complete what they begin.



# Intellectual Autonomy: Being an Independent Thinker

- The opposite of intellectual autonomy is intellectual conformity, or intellectual or emotional dependence.
- Even those who spend years getting a Ph.D. may be intellectually dependent, both academically and personally: uncritically defending the discipline against legitimate critics.

# Recognizing the Interdependence of Intellectual Virtues

- The traits of mind essential for critical thinking are interdependent.
- Consider intellectual humility. To become aware of the limits of our knowledge, we need the intellectual courage to face our own prejudices and ignorance. To discover our own prejudices, in turn, we often must intellectually empathize with and reason within points of view with which we fundamentally disagree.

# Conclusion

- True excellence in thinking is not simply the result of isolated intellectual skills.
- As humans we think; as critical thinkers we analyze our thinking.
- As human thinkers we are governed by our thoughts; as critical thinkers we learn how to govern the thoughts that govern us.
- As humans we are drawn to standards of thinking unworthy of belief; as critical thinkers we expose inappropriate standards and replace them with sound ones.